

OUTSTANDING PERENNIALS IN 1997

Dr. Robert Berghage, Director of the Horticulture Trail Gardens at University Park, shared his best flower choices in the latest "Friends of the Garden" newsletter. In all, Dr. Berghage, his staff, and volunteers planted more than, 800 cultivars in the 1997 trial gardens. For a complete summary of the 1997 season, write to Horticulture Trail Gardens, 102 Tyson Building, University Park, PA. 16802. Enclose a check for \$10 made payable to Penn State University to cover printing and postage. Look for this information on a web page locate at http://violet.cas.psu.edu/ garden/index. html.

Outstanding perennials in the garden in 1997 included 'Magnus.' Echinacea Designated as the 1998 perennial plant of the year, it overwinters well and shows first flowers

as early as late June. New flowers of this purple coneflower bloom well into September. The flowers show a brilliant pink color that attracts many butterflies like the monarch. Unfortunately, Echinacea 'Magnus' attracts Japanese beetles that damage the flower petals. With the flower color peaking in August, expect the flower color to fade into September.

The former perennial plant of the year, Heuchern 'Purple Palace' also overwinters well producing large bronze leaves. This distinct and attractive leaf trail for this coral bell compliments its white flowers. The peak bloom is in June.

Another good performer in 1997 Eryngium was 'Blaukappe,' Performing well for 2 years, the erynigium produces a thistle-like plant with silverstems and flowers. Commonly called sea holly, eryngiums attract many insects including bees in July and

The bright orange flowers of the foxglove called Digitalis 'Apricot' looked especially good last June. A spring flowering perennial with 4 to 5 foot flower spikes, digitalis 'Apricot' may succumb to crown rot during extended cold, wet springs.

On the negative side, a poor performer in 1997 due to the lack of high temperatures included Amaranthus. Amaranthus, didn't live up to its namesake meaning 'not to wither.' Grown for its colorful foliage, amarnathus tricolor is commonly called Joseph's coat.

Other annuals that did not like the lack of heat included sunflowers and morning glory. Expect greatly delayed blooming during cool summers. Flowers enjoying the cool summer included aquilegia. It bloomed well beyond normal (into August). Dianthus, snapdragon, and even some pansies showed acceptable flowering in the summer.

Other good blooming perennials in 1997 included the columbine 'musik' series and the 'cameo' series, the groundcover Persicaria 'Dimity' and Penstemon 'Ruby.' Lastly, another standout in the trials gardens was Heuchera 'Pewter Moon.' It's striking foliage on a compact plant produced a pink flower peaking in July. The leaves are red on the bottom and a mosaic of silver and green on

the upper surface.

Looking for a summary of outstanding flowery annuals from the trial garden in next weeks column.

Any questions regarding the above article can be addressed to Tom Becker, Penn State Cooperative Extension at (717) 840-7408.

New Names In The Dairy Case

KUTZTOWN (Berks Co.) -There are some new names appearing in your dairy case since January 1. Milk and dairy products, with the exception of yogurt, will be sporting new, easier to understand labels. The change will eliminate inconsistencies between "old" regula-tions and "new" regulations, such as those outlined in the Nutrition Labeling Education Act of 1990. The ruling allows processors to use a

ent claim on fluid milk and cultured products, with the exception of yogurt. The new nomeclature will be more consumer friendly. It is important to remember that the regulationaffected dairy products themselves remain the same. There is no change in quality or composi-

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A partial listing of the changes effected be the ruling follows:

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